

HIDDEN TREASURE AT ST. JIM'S!

(See the Magnificent Long Complete Tale of Tom Merry & Co. in this issue.)

The Penny Popular

No.
256.

Three Complete Stories of—
HARRY WHARTON & Co.—JIMMY SILVER & Co.—TOM MERRY & Co.



“JUMP INTO THE DITCH, BUNTER!”

(An Amusing Incident from the Grand Long Complete Story of Harr Wharton & Co.,
contained in this Issue.)

THE ROOKWOOD HOBBYISTS!

A Grand Long Complete Tale, dealing with the Early Adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co. at Rookwood School.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Foretalled.

"WHAT the—how the—why the—" exclaimed Tommy Dodd, leader of the Modern Fourth, as an excited form came tearing wildly into the study.

He jumped up from his desk, and was about to land out at the intruder when he discovered that it was his bosom chum, Tommy Cook, who, with Tommy Dodd and Tommy Doyle made up the Co.

"What the dickens do you mean by dashing into the place like that when I'm busy?" yelled Tommy Dodd.

"I've got—got on—to a wheeze!" gasped Tommy Cook, who had scarcely a breath in his body.

"Out with it, then!" said Tommy Dodd. "Anything up in the end study?"

"Yes!" gasped his chum.

Tommy Dodd fairly started. The end study was the one occupied by Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Newcome, and Raby, the Fistical Four, and the sworn enemies of the Moderns.

"Quick, then; let's have it!"

"I was passing there just now," panted Tommy Cook, "and heard Jimmy Silver propounding a scheme. Of course, I didn't stop to listen, but I heard him mention a hobby club—for the winter evenings, you know! He said something about making us join in!"

"Did he? By Jove, though, it's a ripping idea! Why didn't we think of it first?"

"We can forestall their scheme if we're sharp, because they were still discussing it when someone in the room slammed the door."

"My hat! We'll call a meeting in the Form-room and get the club in full swing before those kids wake up to what's on!"

The juniors rushed from the study down to the Form-room, and Tommy Dodd speedily explained his idea. There were to be no fees, and in order to help the juniors to make up their minds more quickly he offered a free feed to all who put down their names.

This was merely because he was afraid that the Fistical Four would come in and discover what was going on before he had got the thing going properly.

Immediately the free feed was suggested there was a rush of juniors to put down their names. In less than five minutes twenty-five of them had entered their names as members of the Modern Hobby Club, and Tommy Dodd had declared himself president.

Just as he was shutting up his book the four Classical juniors entered the Form-room.

There was an air of great importance about them as Jimmy Silver advanced and pinned a notice upon the wall in a good light.

Then the Fistical Four stood in a group and watched the effect of the announcement upon the Fourth-Formers.

The notice announced a hobby club similar to the one which had been suggested by Tommy Dodd a few minutes previously, except that there was no mention of a free feed, and there were to be subscriptions of one shilling per annum.



"If you'll kindly explain what you're cackling at—" began Lovell.
 "Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Tommy Dodd, leading off a fresh burst, and the room rang with it.

All the members of the Fistical Four were, of course, to hold official positions.

When the occupants of the Form-room had read the notice, the effect was a surprising one.

The Fistical Four were prepared for surprise, approval, disapproval, anything in reason; but they were not prepared for a gasp of amazement and then a general roar of laughter.

Tommy Dodd & Co. led off the laughter, and the rest of the Fourth followed suit, yelling with merriment.

The Fistical Four looked at one another. They were usually very quick to catch on to anything, but they did not understand this reception of their grand idea at all.

They looked amazed at first, and then uncomfortable, and then annoyed. Their countenances began to assume a warmer hue.

"If you'll kindly explain what you're cackling at—" began Lovell as soon as there was a lull in the laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Tommy Dodd, leading off a fresh burst; and the room rang with it.

"I reckon they're off their rockers," said Jimmy Silver. "Right off, I should say."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They're a set of lunatics!" exclaimed Raby. "I never saw anything like it before in my life."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you silly asses can't explain what you're hee-hawing at—"

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Tomms Dodd, with the tears running down his cheeks. "You four innocent kids will by the death of me! What do you mean by sticking your mouldy old ideas up on the wall? That's what I want to know!"

"It's a new, ripping idea!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver indignantly.

"Ha, ha, ha! He says it's a new idea!" howled Tommy Cook.

The room rang with laughter again.

"I say, you're late with your new ideas!" grinned Lacy.

"And you're off the track with your subscriptions," remarked Leggett. "Our hobby club is going to be run without subscriptions, Silver."

"Eh?"

"Are you going to stand a feed to members, Silver?" demanded Towle.

"No, certainly not!"

"Oh, come, don't let Doddy put you in the shade like that! I don't mind belonging to two hobby clubs at once," said Towle, "if it means two separate feeds."

"Dodd! Hobby club! What are you driving at?"

"Oh, I say, you do it well, Silver!" said Lacy. "But it's no good pretending that you didn't know."

"Didn't know what?" roared Jimmy Silver, getting exasperated. "I know

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you're a set of silly asses, if that's what you mean!"

"That isn't what I mean. I mean that you know very well that Tommy Dodd & Co. have just started a hobby club, and taken down all our names as members. Then you come along with your mouldy old ideas. Yah!"

"Tommy Dodd & Co.—have—just—done—what?" gasped Jimmy faintly.

"Do you mean to say you didn't know you hadn't heard something?"

"Of course I didn't—I hadn't—I wouldn't—I wasn't," said Jimmy Silver somewhat incoherently. "Do you mean to say that—that—that—"

"Well, this gets me," said Lacy, shaking his head. "It's the most remarkable coincidence I ever heard of."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tommy Dodd & Co.

The Fistical Four looked at one another helplessly for a moment. The same idea had flashed into four brains at once. Tommy Dodd & Co. had somehow discovered the idea and had forestalled them. They glared wrathfully at the three chums, who were almost hysterical with laughter.

"You—you—you—" stuttered Jimmy Silver.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You trio of—of horrid, rotten plagiarists—"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

floor underneath the wrathful Fistical Four.

"Buck up!" gasped Tommy Cook. "Members of the clobby hub—I mean the hobby club—lend a hand, and turn out these hooligans. Lend a hand!"

The members of the hobby club obeyed the command. The Fistical Four were dragged off their foes, and ignominiously hurled forth into the passage.

They jumped up again and rushed back to the attack, too furious to care for the odds, but the odds were too heavy. Forth they were hurled again, and then they gave it up as a hopeless task, and retreated to their study.

Four dishevelled, dirty, exhausted juniors crawled into the end study, and sank down, gasping for breath. It was a crushing defeat for the Fistical Four for once, and Tommy Dodd & Co., their rivals, reigned supreme.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Fistical Four Seek Vengeance.

NEEDLESS to say, the Fistical Four were mercilessly chipped over that hobby club idea.

The Modern Hobby Club was in full swing, and was in going order now, and Tommy Dodd & Co. had all the credit of it.

"We're going to get our own back, and that's settled," said Jimmy Silver. "My

"And what are we going to do when we get there?"

"You are aware, my infants, that there is only one door to the wood-shed, and only one window," said Jimmy Silver, with the air of an oracle. "The window is small, rather too small for any kid to climb out easily. The door opens outwards. A wedge of wood placed under it when it's shut would keep it shut if there were an elephant inside trying to get out."

"You think we can make them prisoners?"

"I know we can. But that's not all." "Go on!" said Lovell, deeply interested.

"The window is where we come on the scene. We are going to take three garden squirts, and a pail of water carefully mixed according to prescription—one part of red ink to three parts of water."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And when we open fire," said Jimmy Silver, with a smile of seraphic satisfaction. "I think it's very likely that Tommy Dodd & Co. will wish they hadn't boned our idea, and that their giddy members will wish they hadn't joined the hobby club in such a hurry."

"My hat! What a ripping wheeze!"

"Of course, our intentions are of the best. We approve of hobby clubs, but

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"You've boned our idea!"

"He, he, he!"

"You—you—you rotters—you pinchers—you burglars—you've boned the wheeze!"

"Well, I like that!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd. "We start a hobby club and take down the names of the members, and then Jimmy Silver marches in and tries to do the same thing over again, collars our idea under our very noses, and then says we've boned his wheeze! I like that!"

"It's no good," said Tommy Cook, shaking his head solemnly at the Fistical Four. "You're bowled out—fairly bowled out!"

"What do you mean?" almost shrieked Jimmy Silver. "I—I—say—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was our idea!" yelled Jimmy Silver. "I tell you, chaps, we've been half an hour talking it over, and then we came—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a solid fact," exclaimed Raby.

"We came here to—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The whole room rang with laughter. Tommy Dodd & Co. were doubled up with merriment. The Fistical Four were growing more and more excited. Jimmy Silver exchanged a glance with his chums, and went for Tommy Dodd & Co. Lovell, Newcome, and Raby backed him up in a twinkling.

The three plagiarists went rolling on the THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 256.

idea is to bust up the hobby club, and stamp it out. Then we might start one." Lovell, Newcome, and Raby looked doubtful.

"How are you going to do the trick, Jimmy?"

"First of all," said Jimmy Silver, "Tommy Dodd & Co. are giving a feed to the early members of their giddy hobby club. That was what brought in such a rush of membership, I fancy. The greedy bounders thought that the early bird would catch the worm. To do Tommy Dodd justice, he is keeping his word nobly. I saw the three Modern rotters in the school shop laying in the provisions, and they're bluing ten bob on it, if they're bluing tenpence."

"A giddy treat for those kids," said Lovell, "and cheap at signing your name in a book, I reckon. Then there's no subscription; that's where Tommy Dodd comes in strong, too."

"Well, about that feed. There are twenty-five members, I believe, to the hobby club. Anyway, there are too many for Dodd to be able to make it a study feed. As a matter of fact, I've learned that he's going to give it in the wood-shed."

"He's forgotten to ask us," said Newcome.

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"Only members of the club are going," he said, "and we've kept out of their mouldy old club. But we shall be there, all the same."

we like 'em to be run on a sound business footing, none of your free feeds, and no subscription rot," explained Jimmy. "We regard it as our duty to bust up this special hobby club, and start a better one, under better management—er, our own management, in fact."

"Right-ho!" exclaimed Raby. "You talk like a dictionary."

"It's a go, then, kids?"

"Rather!"

"Then we may as well prepare the ammunition," said Jimmy Silver. "The feed is coming off some time this afternoon, as it's a half holiday, and we'd better get ready."

And the chums of the Fourth were soon busy.

To borrow four large-sized garden squirts of Mack, the school-porter and gardener, was the work of a few minutes—and sixpence. To scout round in the deserted studies for bottles of ink, and commandeer them, and make a large collection of them in the end study, took longer, but it was accomplished.

"I reckon that's enough," said Jimmy Silver.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The First Meeting.

TOMMY DODD looked round the wood-shed with an eye of pride.

The preparations for the feed were really on a fine scale.

There was a clear space of considerable extent, and in this a large table had been

made by placing planks across boxes and benches. Benches and faggots made the seats, and if the quarters were somewhat rough-and-ready, the guests were not epicureans, and were not inclined to grumble at trifles.

"Right-ho!" said Tommy Dodd. "Fasten the door, Cooky. We don't want any of those Fifth Form rotters swooping down on us, or those kids out of the end study, either, Gentlemen, this is where we feed."

"Fall to!" said Tommy Cook. And the gentlemen fell to with a will. "This is ripping!" said Towle. "I say, Dobby, you know how to give a feed! I like this!"

"And I say, Dobby," said Lacy, with his mouth full, "it would be a good idea to make these feeds a weekly institution, and—"

"Greedy pig!" said Towle. "You—Hollo, who's that?"

There was a sound at the door. The hobbyists all turned their heads to look at it. Tommy Cook grinned.

"It's all right," he exclaimed, "I've looked it! He can't get in, whoever he is."

The sound at the door ceased. The club members, chuckling, resumed the feast. A few minutes later a shadow crossed the little window.

It was jerked open on its hinges from outside. The Fistical Four looked into the wood-shed, each with an amiable smile upon his face.

"Hallo!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Hallo!" growled Tommy Dodd.

"What do you want?"

"Nothing!"

"Take it, and go!" said Tommy Dodd.

"Don't take any notice of those outsiders, kids!"

"Certainly not!" said Towle. "Silver, you can travel along."

"Thank you!" said Jimmy Silver.

"I'm not going just yet. Have you got that pail ready, Lovell?"

"Here it is!"

"Squirts to the fore!"

There was a sucking sound outside the window, the four heads disappearing for a moment. Then Jimmy Silver's smiling face came into view again, and the nozzle of a large-sized squirt looked into the wood-shed.

Tommy Dodd started to his feet.

"Silver!"

"I say!" yelled Tommy Cook.

"Don't you dare—"

"Stop it!"

"Don't!"

"Ow!"

Swish! Sloosh!

Jimmy Silver, without heeding the frantic exclamations of the club members, brought the squirt into active play. The water, deeply coloured with red ink, swished in a swift jet across the shed, and fell full upon the table, splashing nearly every member of the hobby club.

"You—you beast!" yelled Tommy Dodd.

"Go for him!" shouted Tommy Cook.

The infuriated feasters scrambled towards the window. Jimmy disappeared with his empty squirt, and Raby took his place with a full one.

Swish!

A jet of inky water met the onrushing club members full in their faces, and they stopped, and staggered, drenched and gasping.

Raby stepped aside to make room for Jimmy Silver.

Tommy Dodd & Co., alone of their band, rushed right on to the window. Jimmy Silver was ready. His squirt, full of inky water, swished full in the face of first Tommy Cook, then Tommy Doyle, and then Tommy Dodd, and they reeled away.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Jimmy Silver.

"Keep it up!"

The juniors inside the shed were yelling with rage. As fresh-filled squirts looked in upon them, they dashed round the shed in search of shelter from the jets.

"Follow me!" yelled Tommy Dodd.

"Come on, and we'll kill the beasts!"

He dashed to the door of the wood-shed, and shoved at it.

The door refused to budge.

"It's locked!" yelled Tommy Cook.

"I forgot!"

Tommy Dodd unlocked the door, and shoved again. It still refused to move.

He pushed, and shoved, and banged. Still it did not budge.

"They've fastened it outside!" gasped Towle.

A shout of laughter rang from the window.

"There's a wedge under the door!" called out Jimmy Silver. "You can't get out till we choose to let you out. You may as well take your medicine quietly."

Swish!

A fresh jet of inky water fell among the hobbyists.

They dashed to and fro, seeking shelter and finding none. A fresh rush was made at the window, but it was too small to be easily climbed, and the four squirts played upon the would-be climbers with telling effect.

The faces of the club members had assumed a beautiful crimson, the effect of the red ink in the water, and their collars were streaked with red, their hair matted and sticky.

"Stop it!" shouted Lacy. "You're—you're spoiling the grub! We give you best!"

"We don't!" yelled Tommy Dodd.

Swish!

The water smote Tommy Dodd in the neck, and he gasped and squirmed.

"We're keeping this up," Jimmy Silver announced calmly, "till you come to terms. We're not in a hurry. We've got lots of inky water left."

"What terms?" howled Lacy. "We'll agree to anything!"

"It's for Tommy Dodd & Co. to agree."

"They shall agree! We'll kill them if they don't!"

"Make 'em come forward, then!"

"We sha'n't—we won't!" shouted Tommy Dodd & Co.

"You will!" howled a dozen juniors, who had had quite enough. "You got us into this! Come on!"

And the unfortunate chiefs of the hobby club were dragged forward. The Fistical Four held their squirts ready to fire, but as yet withheld the jets.

"What do you want, you rotters?" howled Tommy Dodd.

"We want you to own up," said Jimmy Silver coolly. "You've got to confess, before all the club, that you boned our idea, and that it was us who first thought of starting a hobby club."

"Rats!"

"Yah!"

"Own up, or we'll drench you to the skin!"

"Ha, ha! Of course, we meant to own up all along!" said Tommy Dodd.

"Ha, ha!"

"Of course," said Tommy Cook. "Ha, ha!"

"It was a good joke," Tommy Dodd remarked.

"A jolly good joke," said Tommy Doyle.

But the members of the hobby club apparently did not take it as a joke.

"So you boned the idea, after all?" shouted Towle. "You—you frauds! You said—"

"We never said anything," said Tommy Dodd. "If you fellows chose to jump at conclusions, that was your own lookout."

"Frauds!"

"Humbugs!"

"Impostors!"

The hobby club members howled these opprobrious terms and many others into the ears of Tommy Dodd & Co.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Jimmy Silver.

"You've come down off your perch this time, Dobby, with a vengeance. Well, now you've owned up, we'll let you off the rest of the washing. You've each got a lovely complexion."

"Now, to give the members a little more," said Lovell, "I reckon we ought to bombard them till they all resign membership in the hobby club."

"Good idea!" exclaimed Raby. "Make ready! Present—"

The four squirts came up to a level.

"Fire!"

"Stop!" yelled Towle. "I resign, for one!"

"So do I!"

"And I!"

"You all resign?"

"Yes!" "Yes!" "Yes!"

"Hands up those who resign!"

Every hand, except those of Tommy Dodd & Co., went promptly up.

"Honour bright?"

"Yes!" "Yes!" "Yes!"

"Then you're let off. The giddy hobby club is now at an end," said Jimmy Silver, grinning. "You can all consider that you're let off cheaply."

"Wait till I get a chance at you!" said Tommy Dodd, rubbing his wet, limp collar.

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"We'll give you as good as you send!" he replied. "I expect these fellows have had enough of your leadership."

"I should say so!" groaned Towle.

"Rather!"

"You—you horrid-rotters!"

"Ha, ha! The fun is over, kids, and we'll take these squirts back to old Mack. Dobby, old son, we'll send a fag to let you out in five minutes."

The Fistical Four disappeared.

Wrath reigned in the wood-shed. The feast was spoiled, the feasters feeling very damp. They were indignant with Tommy Dodd & Co., who had led them into such an unpleasant experience, and even if Jimmy Silver had not made it a condition, it was pretty certain that the hobby club would have been dissolved on the spot.

In fact, Tommy Dodd & Co. looked like being mobbed, when the door of the shed was opened by a Third Form fag, and the prisoners were let out. They marched out dismally.

"I say, buck up, you fellows!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd persuasively.

"Let's go and scalp those rotters for this beastly trick! Come with me—"

"Catch us!" said Towle.

"We've had enough of you three!" growled Lacy.

"We'll get even with those horrid bouncers for this!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd to his chums Cook and Doyle.

"Let's go and get cleaned, and then we'll rag 'em baldheaded!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Classics' Victory.

"HA, HA, HA!"

LOUD sounds of laughter were proceeding from the end study.

It was the hour of the triumph of the famous Fistical Four.

They had triumphed over their rivals of the Fourth Form in the most complete manner, and they had reason to be satisfied.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

They laughed themselves almost into hysterics in the end study at the recollection of the adventure of the wood-shed.

"We've done 'em!" gurgled Jimmy Silver. "The hobby club is busted first try, before it had time to do any hobbying."

"The noble president and the hon. sec. have got the order of the boot," chuckled Raby, "and before they had time to do any presiding or hon.-seeking!"

"I reckon we've scored this time," said Lovell. "They can't stand against us. We're the head of the Fourth."

"We are—we are!"

"Do you remember Tommy Dodd's complexion after we had finished? Ha, ha, ha!"

"And Tommy Cook's? Ho, ho, ho!"

"And Tommy Doyle's? He, he, he!"

"They'll be along here soon," said Jimmy Silver. "They won't take that lying down. We've busted up their hobby club, and they'll want vengeance hot and strong."

"Let 'em all come!"

"I think we'll start a hobby club now," remarked Jimmy Silver. "Daddy's club has gone up, but we want one in the Fourth. We'll carry out our original idea, and we'll make Tommy Dodd & Co. join it, too."

"How?" asked Raby.

"Persuade 'em!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "There are lots of ways of persuading a fellow besides pulling his ears. I think that's what we want now, to prove beyond all cavil that we're the bosses of the Fourth Form—a hobby club of our own, and Tommy Dodd & Co. to join it as members."

"If we can fix it," said Lovell thoughtfully.

"I reckon at the present moment," said Jimmy Silver, "they're preparing for a raid on this study. Did you see young Snooks of the Second pass the door just now?"

"What about him?"

"Well, I saw him, and I saw what he was carrying; and if he wasn't carrying it to the Moderns' study, I'll eat my hat!"

"What was he carrying?" asked Lovell and the others together.

"A—— Hallo! There he is! I say, young Snooks!"

The Second-Former was passing the doorway on his return. He looked in and stopped. In a moment Jimmy Silver had him by the collar.

"No, don't be scared," said the leader of the Fistical Four reassuringly. "I only want to ask you a question, kid. Was that a tin of pepper you were taking up the corridor just now?"

"Yes," grinned Snooks.

"You were taking it to Tommy Dodd?"

"Ye-e-es," said Snooks. "Tommy Dodd gave me twopence to bone it out of the kitchen. He wanted it for something, and he said he would be spotted if he went down."

"I see. Nice of him to bone other people's pepper!"

"Oh, he'll pay for it!" said the Second-Former.

"That's all right. Scat!"

The youngster scuttled away. Jimmy Silver turned to his chums with a broad grin.

"You see the wheeze?" he said. "The moment I saw that kid pass, I guessed he was going to Tommy Dodd, and I knew what the game was. Come along!"

"But what?"

"We're going to hoist the engineer on his own giddy petard! Follow me!"

"Right-ho!"

And Lovell, Newcome, and Raby

hurried after their leader, who led the way with his long strides to Tommy Dodd & Co.'s study.

The door had been left open by the youthful Snooks, and the chums, advancing on tiptoe, peered into the study. Tommy Dodd & Co. were in full view.

They had cleaned themselves up after the adventure of the wood-shed, and now they were looking decidedly gleeful.

The large tin of pepper was open on the table. Tommy Dodd was scooping it out into a thin paper bag. Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle were sniffing.

"Of all the wheezes we've ever worked off on those rotters," said Tommy Dodd, "this is about the best. I fancy it will make them sorry they squirted us in the shed, kids!"

"I fancy so," said Tommy Cook.

"You see, as we're three, and they're four, it's not much good trying to lick them," said Tommy Dodd; "and we can't get anybody to back us up just now. They're all wild at the way the feed turned out."

"They are, old chap. They're more inclined to go for us than to back us up."

"But we shall get our own back with this wheeze," Tommy Dodd remarked, with a grin. "It will beat that squirting business hollow. We've only got to open the door of the study and chuck the bag of pepper into the middle of them. It will burst, and they will have the highest old time they've had in all their innocent little lives!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If I have time," said Tommy Dodd, "I'll sneak the key, and lock the door on the outside. I think we shall bring 'em down off their perch this time, kids. We'll get the whole Form round the door to hear 'em sneezing!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There, I think that's enough. Look out!"

The warning came too late. As Tommy Dodd caught a glimpse of the Fistical Four at the door, the four chums rushed in, and in a second the unprepared three were seized, and they went sprawling on the floor with the victorious Fistical Four on top of them.

"Get 'em!" roared Jimmy Silver.

Tommy Dodd & Co. struggled furiously. But they were at a disadvantage, and they had no chance against the Fistical Four. Jimmy Silver, Newcome, and Raby held them pinned down, while Lovell seized the bag of pepper. A gush of the fiery condiment escaped the bag and scattered itself over the upturned faces of the three prisoners.

"Ow!" yelled Tommy Dodd. "Ow! You—ooooooooo-atchoo-chooooo!"

"Achooooo!" sneezed Cook. "At-at-atchooooooooo!"

They sneezed together, they sneezed alternately. They sneezed solo, and in a trio. They gasped and sneezed till they were crimson in the face, and the water ran in streams from their eyes.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Jimmy Silver.

"How do you like it, Diddy? This is the little treat you prepared for us, isn't it?"

"You—you b-b-beats—atchoo—beasts—atchoo-oo-oo-oooo!"

"Rotters!" gasped Tommy Cook.

"Choo-oo-oooo—atchoo!"

"Ha, ha! What's sauce—or, rather,

pepper—for the goose, is pepper for the gander!" said Jimmy Silver. "Nice little treat you had ready for us!"

"Give 'em some more!" exclaimed Raby.

"Smother 'em!" shouted Jimmy Silver.

The Modern chums struggled desperately. But it was in vain. They were pinned down, and they could not escape. Lovell balanced the bag of pepper thoughtfully over their upturned faces.

"You were going to give us the lot," he remarked. "I suppose we had better let you have it. There's nothing mean about us!"

"Don't!"

"Oh, don't!"

"We give in!"

"You'll choke us!"

"You'll smother us!"

"Don't! Oh, don't!"

"Make it pax!"

"Pax! Pax!"

"Ahem!" said Lovell. "I don't know about making it pax. You bouncers borrowed our idea and spoiled it. Still——"

"Let 'em off if they come to our terms," said Jimmy Silver.

"Yes; if they don't, smother them!"

"Right-ho! Diddy, we are going to start a hobby club in the Fourth Form—not a rotten half-baked hobby club like yours, but a really good and sensible hobby club, run on first-class business principles."

"Gr-r-r!"

"Atchoo-o-o-o-oooo!"

"We intend to get the whole of the Fourth into it, if possible," went on Lovell, "and we want you two to join to give the thing a start."

"Shan't!"

"Won't!"

"Very well, here's the rest of the pepper, if you particularly want it!"

"Ow! Don't!"

"Don't!"

"Are you going to join the hobby club?"

"No! Yes, yes, yes!"

"Yes, yes, yes!"

"Good! Mind, it's honour bright!"

"Honour bright!"

"Then we'll make it pax," said Lovell graciously, putting down the bag of pepper. "Let 'em rise to the occasion, kids!"

Tommy Dodd & Co. staggered to their feet. They were blind with sneezing, and they sneezed and sneezed again as they bolted from the study to the nearest bathroom to plunge their burning faces into cool water.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shouted the Fistical Four. "Once more we knock 'em! Ha, ha, ha!"

And the four marched off arm-in-arm, and cake-walked into the Fourth Form room in high glee.

Tommy Dodd & Co. were very sore—especially about the nose—but they were fellows of their word. The hobby club was started, and they joined it, under the presidency of James Silver, Esquire, and it flourished. And, as the juniors of Rookwood were at bottom very friendly foes, and never bore malice, they pulled together very well, and the Rookwood Hobby Club was quite a success.

THE END.

Another Magnificent Long Complete Tale of Jimmy Silver & Co. in next Friday's issue of the PENNY POPULAR, entitled

"THE MIXED MATCH!" By OWEN CONQUEST.

To avoid disappointment YOU must Order your copy of the PENNY POPULAR in advance.